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I. Introduction

As BWI enters its 4th Congress period, our Global Union Federation (GUF) will be operating in a realm of complex political, economic, cultural, and social dynamics spawned by the emergence of strong right-wing populism in several powerhouse countries and by the undelivered promises of globalisation to a large segment of the world’s population. The impact on the lives of the working class cannot be overemphasised and this has manifested in elections, in change of values, in insularity and protectionism, in cultural interaction, racial relations, support for policies, and even in diminishing of solidarity and respect of human rights.

The global workers’ movement is directly affected as well. Trade unionists have succumbed to the politics of fear and have started to express selective solidarity. Some have given up the values of democracy, tolerance and respect and others even left their unions. Others have accepted transactional politics to safeguard jobs and their organisations. Meanwhile, that kind of politics supported by many workers have embarked to reform or even dismantle the very institutions which they fought for – the trade union movement, the human and labour rights regime, the welfare state, social security, job security and even the very mechanisms of industrial relations.

The global political and economic horizon is full of uncertainty and predictable attack on human and labour rights. But the past has its own misgivings. Globalisation has indeed created winners and lifted millions out of poverty. But those left behind have further suffered from the intense corporate greed that had impacted on governance, tax system, social welfare and even labour rights.

The race to the bottom remains intense as workers continue to suffer the onslaught of the neo-liberal logic as it manifests itself in the labour market, in social security system, in management decisions, and labour laws. Social Europe and the global leader United States have seen major attacks on trade union gains and rights. In some cases, the snapshots of exploitation and abuse are similar to the poorest and undemocratic countries of the world. The great equaliser called globalisation is putting millions into the same level: work life without job security, low wages, union rights, and uncertain pension.

Modern slavery continues to exist in many countries and business settings. Millions are deprived of decent work and pushed to vicious cycle of precariousness. Hundreds have died, injured or even in jail for fighting for their rights. Globalisation’s race to the bottom continued even as corporate social responsibility and the States’ commitment to poverty alleviation and social protection became the fashionable mantra for development. Its promise of better world for everyone is a false promise and the desire for alternatives to it was hijacked by populism.

Trade unions have a central role in reclaiming humanity in the world of work. Workers are faced with governments and employers that facilitate, collaborate, and even implement in the violation of human and labour rights. State obligations are mere printed words while capital continue to innovate on how to maximise profits at the expense of its human resources. To build union power, to defend workers’ rights and gains, and to advance policy agenda for reforms requires us create a united front at the various arenas and context of our working lives. It demands that each worker accept and act on the concept of interconnectedness.

BWI is not only an expression of global solidarity. It is an articulation of workers’ power at the global level as new political-economic and social realities are creating a push and pull between internationalism and localism. People are being divided unfortunately by race, gender, ethnicity and even by social status and standard of living. The imperative of confronting the “us versus them” (sometimes stated as “what’s in it for us?”) is distorting labour internationalism.

The decline of multilateralism and high-handed argumentation for protectionism and nationalism are also changing economic undertakings and challenging how international law and labour standards are applied. In this period of high contestations, BWI must take the lead in creating and sustaining the glue that will fuse unions with each other and link members to members around the world. In the end, BWI shares the South African slogan that “an injury to one is an injury to all”.
The new Strategic Plan takes account these challenges and outlines the directions for the next 4 years as generated from various conversations, processes, projects and debates.

The 2014-2017 Strategic Plan was framed under the slogan ‘Justice for All, Jobs for All – Unions make it Possible” and revolved around the implementation and realisation of the BWI Top 10 Priorities:

**BWI Top 10 Priorities**

1. Organising and negotiating with **multinational companies** (MNCs);

2. Organising workers in major **infrastructure projects and public works**;

3. Promoting forest certification, sustainable forest management and **sustainable jobs in the timber trades**;

4. Organising construction projects for major sport events, under the BWI campaign banner ‘**Fair Play – Fair Games**’;

5. Organise on rights to health, safety and welfare at work and push for improved international standards on **health and safety**;

6. Campaign to stop **precarious work** and social dumping;

7. Combat illegal logging and promote better **governance in the forestry industry** to generate more job opportunities;

8. Campaign to defend and promote **Trade Union Rights**;

9. Global Campaign for **Migrant Workers’ Rights**, and

10. Campaign for **Youth Employment and Gender Equality**.

Below are some headlines showing the results and accomplishments of the previous Strategic Plan:

- **BWI signed 5 new IFAs** and this included 3 Spanish MNCs (Sacyr, Acciona and Dragados), Salini, an Italian industrial group specializing in the construction of major, complex projects, and Veidekke ASA, Norway’s largest construction company.

- The use of **International Framework Agreements (IFAs)** has delivered its intended result – that is to form unions in the value chain of multinationals. BWI denounced at global level the arbitrariness of the management of AW Faber Castell Peruana, in relation to the layoffs and its negative to negotiate. Due to the action of BWI, the recognition of the Trade Union of workers was achieved, the signing of the first collective agreement in the work unit of Lima, Peru and the opening of a social dialogue in accordance with the International Framework Agreement. The Union presented their affiliation to BWI and they were admitted in November of 2016.

- **The Global Network of Cement Unions** was formalised in September 2016 when the global cement conference was held in Panama. This was held as BWI finalised it survey in the industry that exposed the rights deficits and lack of commitments of the companies to their social responsibilities. 113 integrated cement plants in 40 countries were surveyed, and in launching the survey unions have immediately sent the findings to their respective direct management. Over 30 unions around the world submitted the report to their employers and demanded action. Finally, after years of pressure LafargeHolcim has finally agreed to move towards an IFA.

- Global coordinative activities on major issues were held. BWI held its first **Global Conference on Chinese MNCs** participated by other GUFs, partners, ILO and affiliates from different regions. Chinese MNCs behaviour on workers’ rights and poor working conditions led to union actions
and in Africa we recorded a significant number of membership in Chinese MNCs - 30,200 new members in 137 Chinese MNCs, 74 signed CBAs and 66 strikes held in 2016.

- **Four (4) Sports Campaigns** were undertaken during Congress period. The Brazil 2014 World Cup Campaign had the same effect as the South Africa one – it gave momentum to the whole Region and the impact was widespread. The 2016 Rio Olympics Campaign sustained this momentum with even strong industrial actions in 2014 and 2015.

- The advocacy and lobbying with international sports bodies led to BWI labour inspection agreements with FIFA in Russia 2018 World Cup and with the Qatar Supreme Committee for the 2022 World Cup – pioneering engagements to guarantee workers protection in preparations of mega-sporting events. By 15 of August 2017, BWI have undertaken 20 inspections in Russia and 4 in Qatar.

- BWI's innovative unionism also reaped recognitions as it was given the **2014 George Meany-Lane Kirkland Human Rights Award** on 10 October 2014 for our “commitment to improving working conditions for construction workers and protecting the human rights of migrant workers” during our sports campaign. In 2016, the **Swedish Development Forum - FUF** awarded our leaders from GS, Byggnads, and NBTF the recognition for “exceptionally good performance in international aid and development work” and “or their hard-work on ensuring better working and living conditions for workers in the construction sector in relation to international mega-sports events”.

- Our **leadership at the international forest certification systems** was also a major development for BWI. The top certification systems were headed by 2 BWI leaders during this period with Bill Street from USA was the president of the **PEFC** while until now Rulitha from Indonesia in the International Chair of the **FSC**. This created strong trade union push for labour rights in both systems and this even created pressure to misbehaving certified companies as shown in our campaign at the Sabah Forest Industries (SFI).

- With **15 Sectoral or Company Networks** formed, facilitation of organising and problem-solving coordination as well as recruitment of new affiliates took new heights. **Eight (8) new FSC members** increased BWI voice in this global forest certification system. The strategy of **MNCs and Sectoral Networking** worked very well for the many countries as there was massive increase in affiliation from building materials sector. The approach even facilitated the creation of cement federation like in Chile thereby creating unity and union consolidation.

- Through communications and campaigning capacity building, **4 Regions formed their campaign networks** that were instrumental in BWI campaign actions in the past 2 years.

- **Youth structures** were built in all the four Regions of BWI. They made common calls – which is focused on how to build more inclusive trade unions and how young and women workers can claim bigger space both in their unions and in the workplaces.

- “**Valuing Women’s Work**” is the campaign theme that also took prominence during the past Congress period. This consolidated the women leaders and activists with the BWI family towards one focused action. The June 2016 conference, titled “Building the Successor Generation”, brought together 40 young women unionists from Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America, focusing on questions of women’s political visibility and equality in the workplace. It aimed to develop and train the next generation of BWI women leaders, who will each play major roles in the development of the BWI global women’s program.

This backdrop of gains and challenges shaped how the new Strategic Plan has been formulated. BWI is ready to **fight back at the continuing exploitation from the past and committed to innovate to face the challenges of the future.**

The formulation of this Strategic Plan was participatory as two parallel process generated inputs for this document and to the subsequent action planning of the whole BWI family. The World Board-appointed **Strategic Plan Working Group (SPWG)** was the statutory body responsible for the formulation of this document while at the same time the **Innovative Unionism Project** – that led to 4 Regional Conferences and Papers - facilitated the regional debates and contributions.
BWI Strategic Plan 2018-2021

BWI Strategic Plan is both a summary of the affiliates actions and plans and a regional and global articulation of the collective goals and actions of the trade union movement in building-construction, building materials, and timber-based industries. It is a collective response to the diverse and changing realities in workplaces, in industries, in societies, and in the global community for the current Congress period 2018 – 2021 and is anchored on the organisational Vision-Mission-Goals (VMG) of BWI.

It restates the imperatives of global solidarity as the values of democracy, human rights, tolerance, non-discrimination, decent work, social justice and inclusivity are widely being challenged by State actors, employers and other agents of capital as well as individuals and groups in our communities. It marshals the collective wisdom and militancy of our movement to achieve “Power to the People” – that BWI is aspiring for the trade union movement to be truly a “Global Power” ready to resist, build, and advance in the various arenas of trade unionism.

This Strategic Plan reiterates the goals of our global organisation – which we have set to cover defence of human and trade union rights, to strengthen trade unions, to push stable employment in BWI sectors, and to influence policies for decent work – as well as to harness the resources, expertise, and the actions and gains of each of the BWI affiliate.

It elaborates the role of BWI as an actor in the international industrial relations as it negotiates with employers and other labour standard-setting institutions and mechanisms. It also prescribes various steps to build real global solidarity by creating member’s ownership of this Plan, creating more sharing of information about the situation of the workers and their victories, designing new platforms of cooperation and concerted actions based on issues, trades, occupation, and common employers. The permeating concept that guided the formulation and the future implementation this new Strategic Plan is “Innovative Unionism”. It reminds us on the need for union revitalisation, reinvigoration, transformation, and even reinvention. Embracing change beyond structures by infusing innovation in our systems, methods, approaches and actions.

The Plan reaffirms BWI’s 3 Strategic Actions namely: Organising-Trade Union Building, Negotiating Better Terms of Employment, and Influencing Policies but intersects it in the Arenas of Trade Unionism that will elaborate the different levels of union engagements, the corresponding organisational forms, and the issues that will be worked on.

The Plan then lay-out the focus for the next period in the form of identifying BWI’s Convergence wherein the BWI family of unions and structures shall jointly work on. These are: 1) Rights for All, 2) Safe Work, 3) Youth in Unions, 4) Gender Equality, 5) Sustainable Industries, 6) Fair Games, and 7) Organised Value Chains.

The 2018 – 2021 Strategic Plan comes in a package of 3 stand-alone documents. One paper is describing the BWI industries in details and analysing and relating them with the lens of the future of work. Another is the analysis of supply-value chain in BWI Industries which will describe the interconnectedness of workers within companies and industries. Finally, this strategy paper which lays-out the arenas of trade union work, the strategic actions of BWI and the 7 convergence of actions for BWI as a global union and for its members as actors in their respective countries and regions.

Upon adoption, the document will then guide the BWI Global Secretariat and the Regions in developing their own action plans with concrete targets, indicators, tasking, and even resources and restructuring as needed. This will facilitate the ownership of the Plan by BWI members and at the same time the mutually reinforcing alignment of the affiliates’ goals and actions. As usual, the Strategic Plan will also instruct the solidarity programmes and projects as it contributes in achieving the set priorities and deliverables.

These operational documents of the Strategic Plan which will be collectively called BWI Impact 2018 – 2021 shall be the basis of the systematic monitoring, evaluation and reporting process that BWI has been practicing for years.
II. BWI Vision, Mission and Goals

Vision. A world with strong, independent, and democratic trade unions in the building and timber trades, where all workers have equitable access to stable jobs, fair wages and safe and healthy working and living conditions. We want to see an enabling environment for trade unions, where international labour standards are promoted, implemented and enforced, and where social justice, gender equality and respect for trade union and human rights prevail.

Mission. Our fundamental mission is to defend and advance workers’ rights, and to improve working and living conditions in our sectors. The BWI, above all, has a rights-based approach. We believe that trade union rights are human rights and are based on equality, solidarity and democracy, and that trade unions are indispensable to good governance. The international labour standards of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the Declaration of Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and the Decent Work agenda of the ILO is a trade union agenda in our sectors. We demonstrate the positive contribution from organised labour, the “Union Effect” in achieving these development objectives and in making workers’ rights a priority. Our trade union networks are ready to confront exploitative employment and labour practices and to stand up for the rights of all workers in the building and timber trades.

Goals. To improve working and living conditions in the building and wood sectors and promote sustainable industrial development. Our global union of 12-million members from 351 affiliates in 128 countries commit to:

- **Promote and defend human and trade union rights.** Demonstrate the positive “Union effect” in achieving sustainable development and Decent Work through campaigns, networking, communications and development projects.

- **Increase trade union strength.** Provide support for constant growth of trade union membership among formal and informal workers and improve trade union capacity to represent workers in sectoral policy, collective bargaining and workplace organising activities.

- **Promote a stable and high level of employment in our sectors.** More direct employment and wider collective bargaining coverage is essential to guarantee trade union and employment rights, living wages for men and women, proper working hours, good standards of health, safety and welfare, and skills development to minimise the health risks for workers and to maximise their employability and quality of work. BWI will combat social dumping caused by heightened competition between companies on wages and working conditions.

- **Influence policy and strengthen the capacity of institutions and tripartite structures in our sectors.** Aim to improve employment and labour practices, and to promote, implement and enforce labour standards through tripartism, social dialogue and sustainable industrial policy development. Provide support for greater trade union participation in the decision-making processes.
III. Our Context and Challenges

1. A New World Disorder

A new spectre is haunting the world. Right-wing populism is engulfing the global polity as President Trump transforms his campaign promises into actions that threaten the values of democracy, equality, and social justice. The right-wing political virus is threatening the very social fabric of many societies specially in Europe as far right parties and movement gain parliamentary footholds. Some of them are even at the throes of being elected into national power reinforcing the politics of fear and demonization. They are inspired by the likes of Trump (USA), Duterte (Philippines), Erdogan (Turkey), and Orban (Hungary) which Amnesty International calls as “politicians calling themselves anti-establishment… wielding a toxic agenda that hounds, scapegoats and dehumanizes entire groups of people.”

The traditionally labour-supported establishment parties did its share to breed discontent. Presiding over capitalism has undermined the principles and goals of many Left parties. Victimised by the failures of globalisation’s promises and neo-liberal policies, massive number of workers are voting for candidates that would threaten their freedoms and rights. The phenomenon of “voting against self-interests” has taken root and this has a spill over effect on the trade union movement.

Various surveys have shown that workers – trade unionists in particular – have voted for these illiberal groups and have ranged up to around 45% of union membership. Trump got 43% of union households is one indicator while Sweden Democrats garnered 11% of votes from the blue-collar confederation LO. Nationalist-oriented True Finns, on the other hand, described itself as largest workers’ party in Finland after being elected as the second largest party in 2015. Union leaders call in UK for its 6-million members to vote for Remain in EU was not enough to stop the Brexit. Duterte’s 39% win in the Philippines was carried by disenchanted workers and several big trade unions and finally, French far-right presidential candidate Marie Le Pen was at one time polled with 44% support of working class indicating a shift of labour votes to the right.

Evidently, the many failures of the globalisation have led to continuing poverty in many countries, sustained inequality, and created a massive corporate wealth at the expense of workers and even the environment. Global inequality data shows that while there are millions uplifted from poverty and middle class in many countries increased, the wealth concentration remained in few countries and individuals whose companies were involved in exploitative practices. With the comprehensive data available only until 2013, World Bank noted that 767-million people are living under poverty line of $1.90 per day and revealed that 1.1 billion fewer poor people have been tracked between 1990 and 2012 however the Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia still hosts 84% of the world poorest population.
But the low threshold of $1.90 per day also reveals that there are much more people living in miserable conditions. Data from 2012 reveals there are still 168-million child labourers forced to contribute in the livelihood of their families. On the other hand, OXFAM revealed in early 2017 that eight men have wealth equivalent to the wealth of half of the humanity. The sharp contradictions of wealth and inequality is increasing and these manifest intensely in the labour markets we will be illustrating later.

**Conflicts** like civil war and aggressions continued to take its toll on thousands of innocent lives. This also created some of the biggest movement of people since the Second World War. The refugee crisis in Europe, the boat people to Australia, and massive human trafficking to North America shows the enormous humanitarian problem when economic failures and violent conflicts combine. **Failed states** in political and economic terms also manifest the failure of the global community to assist in peace-making and spread prosperity. Even the Arab Springs’ promise of democracy and prosperity have merely extended the internecine bloodletting of communities.

As the “fair societies projects” disappoint, people seek to blame external actors spawning **racism and xenophobia**. On the other hand, **terrorism and radicalism** became a magnet for unemployed youth. A new generation of jihadists are roaming the world to fight. Both have evolved into mutually reinforcing factors that is breaking apart communities and societies.

On the other hand, **global governance** is in tatters as double standards and the arrogance of power by some countries emasculates peace processes, disregard national sovereignty, and even protection of human rights. **Multilateralism** is becoming more of a lip service that is eroding global peace. The United States and Russia are now leading in assertions of national interest to disregard international institutions and values.

The **global economic outlook** is uneven and there is an overhauling of economic power brought about by the fall of prices of commodities like oil and other mineral products. The Global Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth in 2016 was at 3.1 per cent which was the lowest since 2010. This impacted on job creation, potentials for better working conditions and over-all economic equity. Economic mismanagement and corruption reinforced by major political hostilities not only dampened business opportunities but pushed backed millions into unemployment and poverty.

Gender inequality remains a serious problem around the globe and in the world of work. According to the ILO Women and Work Trends 2016, although some improvements have been achieved, **women continue to face significant obstacles in entering the labour market** and suffer from substantial pay gaps, accounted for by occupational segregation and discrimination, and by differences in paid and unpaid hours worked. These prevent them from enjoying equal access to opportunities, and to opportunities that are in line with their significant progress in educational achievement over the past decades.

There is a stronger call on the need to **return power to the people**. Emerging resistance and alternative-making is becoming more widespread. New social movements are gaining ground and the massive mobilisation of people on various issues is showing the force of the collective.

But this phenomenon can go to some dangerous grounds. The values, goals and programs that entice people to become more active politically or to find alternatives can be **contradictory to democratic ideals and social inclusivity**. The debacle of parties and institutions in many countries gave rise to the populist movements that are occupying bigger political space and in some cases, parliamentary power.

**Trade unions** themselves are also being threatened. When solidarity is replaced by “you versus us” mentality and when collective interests and actions are replaced by rabid individualism, the very cornerstone of the workers’ movement can be eroded. The so-called “Ubersification” of work and the creation of a global “precariat” diminishes the rationale and functionality of trade unions.
2. BWI Industries and Trends

The global working class’ situation is a picture of contradictions. There are those in decent working conditions who were enjoying their fair wages and job security and those that are shackled to poverty and exploitation.

According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO), there are 201-million unemployed globally but a bigger number of 1.4-billion are in vulnerable employment which is at staggering 42% of the total employment. Perpetual precariousness is becoming the norm in the livelihood of millions. The rise of the so-called “precariat” underscores the massive perilous situation of workers as they struggle with low pay, no job security, no social security, and daily exposure to dangerous workplaces.

The global income picture also shows inequality and discrimination. As usual, higher wage growths happen in developed countries while the rest of the developing Regions real wages fell in 2015 between 1.3% (Latin America and the Caribbean) to 5.2% (Eastern Europe). Only Asia with its economic powerhouse countries showed strong 4% increase. Labour’s share of the GDP also continues to decline which ILO Global Wage Report 2016/2017 instructively attributed “likely due to a combination of factors including globalization, skills-biased technology, the weakening of labour market institutions, and the growing pressure from financial markets to shift surpluses generated by large businesses towards investors”. Gender pay gaps was even tracked to be between 0 to almost 45% in the surveyed countries of the Report.

The poverty data mentioned above using $1.30 as threshold validates the challenges for Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. Using the working poverty threshold of $ 3.10 per day, almost 50% of workers in Southern Asia and almost two-thirds of workers in sub-Saharan Africa are living in extreme or moderate working poverty. The Report has even estimated that “workers earning less than US$3.10 per day over the next two years are expected to increase by around 3 million per year in developing countries”.

BWI sectors of building-construction, building materials and wood and forestry constitute a big segment of the global labour force. Building industry is estimated to employ around 7% of the global work force and foreseen to reach 13% of the GDP by 2020.

The whole wood sector is estimated to have 54.2 million jobs which is broken down as 13.2 million in formal employment and 41 million in informal employment. It contributes 1% to the global GDP and this is pegged at $ 600-billion though this is underestimated due to massive informality. There are estimates that global demand for timber will quadruple by 2050 hinting major economic potentials and employment for the sector.

The abuse of workers is even presided by big corporate powers and their suppliers. The Economist magazine reported that Multinational Companies (MNCs) “employ only one in 50 of the world’s workers... co-ordinate the supply chains that account for over 50% of all trade... account for a third of the value of the world’s stock markets and they own the lion’s share of its intellectual property—from lingerie designs to virtual-reality software and diabetes drugs.” MNCs who profess commitment to international labour standards and even sign to international compacts and certification systems are even guilty of impunity in corporate misbehaviour.
From use of child labour by marquee corporate names to presence of slave-like working conditions in high profile projects, MNCs have violated rights with impunity in many countries around the world. The need to hold them to account requires urgency as more and more abuses are gaining attention and at the same time the mechanism of complaint by OECD has only 3% of cases from the construction industry.

BWI sectors have massive utilisation of migrant workers who have become the poster people of the industries and at the same time continue to be forced to work in appalling conditions. They are held to bondage, forced to pay exorbitant placement fees, victims of contract substitution, and receive lower pay than the local work force. The global number of migrant workers has reached 150-million in 2015 and construction together with manufacturing accounts for 26.7-million (17.8%) while agriculture's share – which includes wood workers – is pegged at 16.7 million (11.1%). This puts the main BWI sectors (as part of major cluster) wherein migration is high as both total 28.9% of all global migrants.

New technology and new ways of organising work are displacing workers and at the same time requiring new skills. Pre-fabrication is creating “factories” instead of labour intensive worksites and assemblers take more role in building works. 3-D printing may soon be taking carpenters and brick-layers out of employment as houses are printed on site. While construction is one of the industries with lowest digitisation (second to agriculture), technological innovation is now infusing new skills into the labour market as digital construction becomes essential. Nano-technology use promises safer, cheaper, and stronger construction while in wood it is packaged as facilitating sustainable construction.

Wood on the other hand is becoming one of the most sought after building materials. Wooden buildings are even being built in bigger numbers in developed countries. Green cement is known for its thermal and fire-resistant properties and is estimated to reduce carbon footprint by 40 to 50% while water absorbent pavements of special cements have hugged the internet limelight. New products, new value chains and new skills should be assessed to ensure that unions are ready to adapt, adjust or defend their role in the labour market.

Urbanisation and infrastructure development will continue therefore offering new jobs and new investments for the BWI industries. Global infrastructure spending between 2015 and 2020 is estimated to be about $29-trillion. This will require labour-intensive works and employment for our members. But this has been a locus of exploitation as well with major corporate names and informal employers both abuse their work force.

Climate change transition puts the BWI industries at the forefront of work and technology transformation. Renovation, retrofitting, smart building, sustainable forest management, certification are some concepts and processes that alters labour utilisation due to climate change and has impact on employment and skills. ILO estimated in 2012 that 15 to 60-million jobs could be created in the next 20 years as we move to green economy – affecting 1.5-billion people. Forestry, building and transport (infrastructure) are 3 BWI sectors that will play a central role among the 8 forefront industries.

BWI industries has various types of supply-value chains that affects workers' conditions as these chains - such as MNCs and workplaces with their production chain, companies procuring manufactures from around the world, commodities extracted from mines and handled by building workers, and even mega-sporting events creating not only construction value but also other industrial goods - form part of the world of work of BWI members. Exploitation and abuse occurs in these chains and trade union actions are therefore needed.
3. Exploitation Inc.

Exploitation of workers abound around the world. We can find it even in the most unexpected countries and companies. Top brands and companies are exposed to be using child labour. European Union and Gulf countries are exposed to host slave-like employment for migrants. **Migrants are exploited even before they leave their country.** Paying exorbitant placement fees that lock them in debts for many years, to contract substitution at the airports, and to passport confiscation upon arrival at their labour camps is a graphical depiction of the chain of abuse.

**Unemployment and underemployment** in BWI sectors is a massive problem and some countries have suffered in the past for year. Job crisis is overwhelming in many sub-industries and this has ripple effect on the sustainability and survival of BWI affiliates. **Living wage** problems pervade in BWI industries as Indian brick kiln and stone quarry workers to Zimbabwe building workers are having jobs but without decent income.

**Slave-like work** persists around the world and it has even been exposed in World Cup and Olympics worksites. Trafficking undertaken by criminal groups put numerous migrant workers into exploitative situation of almost no escape.

**Women workers** in the BWI sectors are involved in unskilled, informal or manual labour with no social protection and job security, training opportunities for women is limited and at times non-existent, and therefore denied equal remuneration and are not even paid the minimum wage. Health and safety issues and facilities, especially concerning reproductive health and personal hygiene, are not addressed by employers. In the BWI sectors, like in most sectors, there is a culture that is male dominated and often goes together with a sexist and macho culture, resulting in women workers becoming vulnerable to different forms of **gender-based violence** at work.

**Outsourcing and sub-contracting** are becoming norms of employment. Job security and full coverage of statutory benefits and social security is becoming a rare work arrangement as the principle of efficiency (not social investment) takes precedence over decent work. Such flexible use of labour resulted in millions are still without coverage of **social protection**. Workers spend their working lives with low wages only to end it with zero pension. In the Future of Jobs Report 2016 of the World Economic Forum, the 100 largest employers (covering 13-million workers) were surveyed and the for 44% of them, the **top driver of change is the “changing work environment and flexible working arrangements”** – meaning smaller pool of full-time workers. This again validates the desire of employers to make precariousness as a guarantee for profits.

Going home alive is a daily challenge for many workers. Some describe their everyday life as like going to the battlefield. The most vivid description of the problems with occupation health and safety in recent years is that of Guy Rider, ILO Director General when he declared in 2014 that “work claims more victims around the globe than does war: an estimated 2.3 million workers die every year from occupational accidents and diseases.” BWI sectors are **dangerous workplaces** as construction have high rate of deaths which is pegged at 108,000 a year.

The silent killer **asbestos** also has taken lives across generations. It is estimated that 125-million people are exposed to it at workplaces, 50% of occupational cancers are caused by it, and thousands attributable deaths are tracked every year. The global ban remains elusive as corporate lobby continue to move against the end of its production and use.

**Building collapse** have occurred more frequently the past years specially in South Asia and Africa. Infrastructure accidents also contributes to the high death rates as dams, metros, and flyover continue to collapse. The data on building collapses is highly deficient but available information indicates that in South Asia around **4,500 workers die each year in building collapses** (about 2,600 in India alone).
Mega-sporting events, unfortunately, sacrificed workers' lives for the euphoria of the fans. The last 2 editions of FIFA World Cup claimed 2 and 14 South African and Brazilian workers, respectively, while the EURO 2012 football championships had 20 fatalities. The 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio resulted in 12 avoidable deaths. BWI estimated that Sochi Winter Olympics in Russia has a toll of almost 70 workers' lives while the World Cup 2018 in Russia wraps up its construction work with 19 dead workers. The 2018 Pyeongchang Winter Olympics will be opening in a few months at the cost of 4 workers' lives while the global attention on Qatar continues, 2022 FIFA World Cup stadium accidents have killed 2 workers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>No. of deaths</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FIFA 2010 World Cup</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UEFA Euro 2012</td>
<td>Poland-Ukraine</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>Brazil</td>
<td>12</td>
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<td>Sochi 2014**</td>
<td>Russia</td>
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<td>FIFA 2018 World Cup</td>
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<td>FIFA 2022 World Cup***</td>
<td>Qatar</td>
<td>2</td>
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*BWII tally of deaths in mega-sporting events since the start of its Sports Campaign for Decent Work in 2007 (as of 15 August).
**BWII estimates based on official records as well as trade union and NGO sources.
***Fatal accidents in World Cup stadiums though we take note of the fatalities with the whole construction industry including deaths in accommodation facilities as reported in various media outlets since 2015.

Thus, global inequality has been pushing civil strife, social conflicts, populism, racism, xenophobia, and reinforces the cycle of poverty. When Davos rings the alarm bells, we can surmise that the problem of social injustice is indeed grave and worrying.

4. Unions in face of Challenges

Trade unions are under attack at international and national levels. ILO – apex tripartite body of labour standard setting and implementation – is becoming emasculated. The biggest news of the past years is the challenge on the right to strike.

The ITUC Global Rights Index 2016 showed that unionism is a dangerous undertaking as murder, assassination, imprisonment, and dismissal from work continue to characterise the exercise of workers' rights. The records of many countries are abysmal as the report revealed that 58% of countries exclude workers from labour laws, 68% of the countries have workers without right to strike, 57% of countries deny collective bargaining, while arbitrary arrest, detention occurred in 44 of them and trade unionists...
were exposed to physical violence in 52 countries – a jump from 36 in 2015. Finally, killings occurred in 11 countries exhibiting the widespread danger that has been persisting for decades.

BWI affiliates and members have been at the receiving end of these assaults. Numerous cases have been recorded ranging from massive dismissals to targeted for union weakening. Labor law reforms have seen undermining of the genuine functioning of trade unions. **De-recognition of unions** through legislative and judicial actions are occurring in more countries. **Criminalising trade unionism** is a stronger form of attack as workers in South Korea, Hong Kong, and even Australia are painted as guilty of criminal activities. **Social Dialogue and State commitments** to international labour standards is weakening in many countries. Unions are being pushed into irrelevance.

The **Right to Work legislation** in the United States is a clear institutional-legislative attack on trade unions. The law allows workers to opt out of paying fees to unions that represent them in collective bargaining. It is now in force in 28 states and the Republican party, being majority in both houses of Congress, have started to float the **idea of a national right to work law**. It signals the stronger and more comprehensive attack of the representative role and sustainability of trade unions.

In a 2016 ILO study on Europe, it was revealed that there are countries that social dialogues were discontinued during the 2008-2012 crisis period and during the post-crisis period of 2013-2015. There were indications of **increased unilateral government regulations** with notable deterioration in Belgium and Slovenia in 2014-2015. The decline of collective bargaining coverage was noted - with some countries even limiting the automatic extension of agreements. This trend was paralleled by **“observed increase of income inequality”**. All these happening in the context of austerity programmes, labour market and pension reforms, and high unemployment. These mix, of course, is putting pressure on union power and membership base and has opened more possibilities for workers to be abused and exploited – right in the heart of what is called Social Europe.

Our movement also faces internal challenges as our global union (as a global structure and as national unions) is **characterised by varied levels development**. We have unions with full bargaining rights and robust social security systems while there are workers working under modern slavery. It has been noted that the so-called social Europe is becoming more and more like the Global South as austerity programs and employers’ assertions strip or weaken the institutions that facilitated its strong role in the labour market. **Membership decline** is one challenge that the BWI is facing. Job losses, continuing informality, economic decline, anti-union labour laws and union busting all conspire to keep union work unstable. **Multiplicity and competition**, unfortunately, exists in many national settings. This is weakening the union power and pits workers against each other.

In the last years, number of interventions had been carried out by BWI at the global, regional, and national levels for achieving **gender equality**. But still, many unions do not recognize the importance of organizing women workers and supporting women’s rights as a precondition in strengthening unions so that they are better able to defend workers’ rights and interests. Data and information gathered through various gender audits and surveys show that **women and gender concerns are not integrated** in the priority agenda of the trade unions.
Unequal income and rights paints a sad picture for world of work. We cannot overemphasize the value and imperative of global solidarity. The conventional model of global solidarity is now at least has taken new forms – ranging from being a more rank and file-led campaigning trade union movement and direct industrial action-oriented organisations to development cooperation projects to united actions targeting MNCs. The struggle has become international and actions have been transformed fighting back together beyond borders.

IV. BWI Strategic Actions

This Strategic Plan is framed on Innovative Unionism as the need for workers' organisations to rebuild, reform, and adapt its structures and actions becomes more urgent. The challenge of the new world order and the struggles at the workplaces require reinventing and transforming trade unions. The location of the struggles, engagements, and actions within the various contexts described together with the industrial, social and political counterparts of the working class will guide the BWI in the next 4 years.

The working people must maintain or, in many cases, capture their social power to ensure that a socially responsible present and a fair future are built through trade unions operating at the different levels of industrial relations, contestations, regulations, and policy making. We are guided by the 2 parts of our Congress theme: “Amandla!” which is the South African slogan for power; and “Power to the People” which is the aim that we must pursue in these changing and challenging times. In sum, creating global solidarity for global power guarantees that the goals of BWI could be achieved.

The previous Strategic Plan introduced the concept of “trade union effect” to elaborate how trade unions affect the lives of workers as well as to identify the decent work deficits that instructs the global union the issues and challenges to work on. Related to this are the 3 Strategic Actions that has been adopted as intersecting in every area of work of BWI.

1. Organising-Trade Union Building

Trade unions operate on strength in numbers. Power can only be developed if it is based on broad and robust representativity. Organising and recruitment is a fundamental task of trade unions. This starts in the work place and extends up to BWI as a global unions federation and the common priority that will characterise the work in this congress period is membership retention. Union work is full of risks and the management militancy against workers’ organisations is reinforced by the up and down of the economy. The decline of membership must be stopped as the net recruitment of many affiliates showed a consistent downward trend.

This strategy also takes into consideration the new forms of employment and the atypical work settings that has prevented traditional trade union organising and representation. Sub-contracting, casual work, self-employment, outsourcing, piece rate, migrant workers, posted workers, project contracts and other forms of flexible and precarious work have become more pervasive in our industries. Criminal groups have even become actors in employment of workers as trafficking and extortion becomes more prevalent. This requires new approaches and means of protection and BWI will facilitate a global union-wide development of organising methods to reach and represent these workers. It pushes for united actions to reinforce the representation coverage of workers.

The desire to enhance union density and protect as many workers as possible are the foundation of the planned BWI Global Organising Academy which will seek to find new actions around union building, to develop and exchange methods and tactics or recruitment, to train corps of dedicated and skilled union organisers, and to act as platform for coordination. One adjustment is to encourage affiliates to target the modern and more formal segments of our industries to create more robust unions operating in institutionalise representation so that these strong unions can help guarantee that the more informal, precarious and less protected workers can be defended by the movement. In sum, we also organise unions to create a powerful front of labour rights defenders around the world as well as to reinforce trade unions as schools of democracy based on culture of peace, justice, tolerance and action-mobilisation.
Networking and coordination in value chains, in occupational trades, in companies, and even common advocacies is crucial in making strong impact and in achieving goals and agendas. The BWI Global Cement Network, the Global Migration Network, and the BWI Global Wood and Forestry Network are main examples of strong cooperation of unions in creating critical mass of members on a certain industry or company. Networking even in MNCs without IFAs will also be undertaken to galvanise solidarity and union power within the corporate value chain.

Creation of thematic and organisational platforms as well as facilitating organisational unity or even mergers among affiliates shall be pursued further in the next congress cycle. BWI sees this as a contribution to prevent the further atomisation of unions in certain countries and sub-regions and at the same time create more effective and efficient way of achieving union objectives and agenda.

At the same time, our global union will launch a strong global campaign and exposé on alternative non-union representation bodies that are finding manifestations in various countries and have been undermining trade unions for some years now. The emergence and expansion of the “asociaciones solidaritas” from Costa Rica to 6 more countries in Latin America is an ongoing project to avoid unions in workplaces as their premise is “to guarantee for the company in terms of having a working environment that promotes harmonious relationships with the workers, that would result in improved production.” Employers have been receptive to this kind of workers’ representation and in other Regions they have even developed Labour-Management Councils (LMCs) that were ultimately used to emasculate the union movement.

Strategic occupational groups of BWI will be consolidated to increase cooperation, coordination, and united actions. This shall include tower crane operators, electricity and power workers, white collar workers, and those in heavy machinery and infrastructure, specially dam construction workers.

As the world is recognising that there are macroeconomic gains in raising the female labour participation, BWI should also recognise and institutionalise a gender-fair organising framework as part of its global union-wide development of new organising methods and approaches.

Trade union building also means the strengthening of the global federation infrastructure as it guarantees the effectiveness and efficiency of the concerted actions of BWI. Creating new means of mobilising and training members are to be developed. Mass education and awareness building shall be strongly differentiated for the systematic and rigidly monitored union career pathing for those receiving skills training. Political education to expand union consciousness on issues of power in workplaces to societies up to global community shall be expanded.

Bringing talents and competencies from the affiliates into the global actions shall be one of the cornerstone in creating a deeper culture of solidarity and mobilisation with BWI. Fine-tuning the regional structures and the various units of the secretariat shall be undertaken to adapt to the new demands of the Strategic Plan as well as to consider the possibilities, risks, and changes that will come during the congress period.

For the next 4 years, our work to create global workers’ power based on strong and active national unions under organising and trade union building will be framed as BUILD!
2. Negotiating

Trade unions are representative organisations whose traditional instrument to define jointly with employers the terms and conditions of employment is collective bargaining. The resulting agreement has myriad of contents as shaped by the labour laws and the political-economic context in which unions negotiate. Some merely repeats labour laws and standards (therefore mocks union power) while others have wider latitude of negotiated items. Wages remains to be the central agenda for unions and in some cases dues payment through check off also assist in the sustainability of the union as a bargaining agent.

While there are other means to agree with employers – such as Memorandum of Agreements or Understanding - collective agreements are the strongest mechanism to bind the employers to fulfil its obligations to workers under an industrial relations system. Such agreements are signed at project site level, at workplace-plant level, at industry-sector level, and even at national multi-sectoral level. BWI will encourage more exchanges and create more resource to push for institutionalised collective bargaining as both States and employers have been trying to emasculate, if not abandon, collective bargaining in many countries. This would mean deeper and wider coordination around collective bargaining including sharing and promotion of best practices and models in the next 4 years.

Negotiating International Framework Agreements (IFAs) is a function of the BWI to provide protective mechanism for the workers of a multinational company. BWI has signed 21 IFAs and these are monitored by a joint reference group that conducts inspections, social audits, and conduct problem-solving meetings. The ultimate aim of IFAs is to form trade unions and create protection mechanisms for workers in the whole company chain and this shall include contractors, sub-contractors, subsidiaries, and suppliers. This Strategic Plan targets to scale-up the engagement with companies by monitoring more areas of the corporate network and at the same time conduct more strategic organising to create a widest union coverage in value chain.

BWI will also negotiate and campaign for protection of workers in corporate mergers and in privatization. The primacy of profit has led companies to mergers and acquisitions that meant thousands of job losses. BWI has experienced this with the titans of the cement industry (Lafarge and Holcim) and it showed that global solidarity can work to protect workers’ rights as the various action around the campaign “No Merger without Workers’ Rights” has led to a full-pledge IFA negotiations with the new company.

As a result of the BWI Sports Campaign, our global union signed agreements on labour inspections with FIFA for Russia World Cup 2018 and with the Qatari Supreme Committee for the Qatar World Cup 2022. Labour inspections, which are important tools to monitor and enforce labour standards, are being developed further by BWI as a key area of competence.

The use of the OECD Guidelines on Multinational Companies on violations of human and labour rights in Qatar World Cup 2022 against FIFA also opened a new channel of negotiations. While the formal process

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<th>List of BWI IFAs</th>
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<td>1. Faber-Castell</td>
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<td>2. Hochtief</td>
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<td>10. Wilkhahn</td>
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<td>11. ENGIE</td>
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is mediation, the engagement with FIFA is providing BWI an opportunity to push for changes in policies and practices.

**For the Congress period, bargaining better working conditions at various levels as governed by international labour standards and principles of democracy, equity, social justice and sustainability, negotiating shall be categorised as DEFEND!**

3. **Influencing**

Not all issues concerning labour is resolved by bilateral negotiations and engagements with employers. Actors external to workplaces and industries now form part of the broader industrial relations in regulating, promoting, monitoring, mediating, and even managing labour concerns.

**States** – as both actors and regulators of industrial relations – should be lobbied to reform labour laws, redefine and enforce labour standards, and respect workers’ rights. Negotiations also occur in certain instances and this gave workers victories in more rights and benefits. Governments also come together in **regional economic blocs** that have developed standards setting regimes on labour matters, albeit in different stages of institutionalisation. The EU, SAARC, ASEAN, MERCOSUR, APEC and SADC are some examples that we should target for influencing as their policies affect our membership.

Multilateral institutions and processes for standard setting through ILO and other specialised UN agencies provides a platform for workers and employers to engage governments. Adoption of ILO Conventions and ratification at country levels is a crucial area of work for BWI and its affiliates.

**International Financial Institutions (IFIs)** have developed procurement guidelines that pertains to human and labour rights. BWI has strongly lobbied World Bank and regional development banks to come up with comprehensive guidelines for decent work. Our regular dialogue with and participation in consultative bodies of the World Bank has led to a more institutional cooperation. As provider of loans to companies, there is also an opportunity for us to pressure them in keeping their clients in line to respect international labour standards.

**Labour clauses and guidelines** are robust and effective instruments that give protection to workers, formalise employment, promote skills development and increase health and safety. They are existing from municipal level to global institutions including ILO and pushing for its enforcement has an encompassing result. The 2016 OECD Guidelines Common Approaches for Export Credit Agencies reinforces the principle of responsible business conduct and the need to relate it to bids evaluation and public procurement.
New handles of **rule-making and application of labour standards** from both state and non-state actors or mechanisms will have to be maximised by BWI in its goal to defend workers wherever as possible.

**Certification systems** also exist to reinforce standard settings within the purview of market access, consumer awareness and stakeholders’ commitment to labour rights. The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) are the biggest systems where BWI is participating actively and have used their complaint mechanisms in several instances.

**Climate change policies** have direct impact on BWI industries. The call for Just Transition is echoed by BWI as our members are at the forefront renovation, retrofitting, reconfiguring for smart buildings, sustainable forest management and green construction. One estimate puts all the BWI industries as **40% of the greenhouse gases emission** – underscoring the significant impact and implications on BWI members.

To succeed in this arena means BWI should sustain and reinforce its **lobbying and advocacy resources** (staff, competence, finances, sharing of responsibilities, and knowledge base) and affiliates must be ready to support through mobilisation, representation, urgent or direct actions, and sharing of competence and resources. **Global policy-making** is at the heart of this action.

**Communication and campaigning** shall buttress all the 3 strategic actions thus BWI will innovate in sending its messages and broadening its reach by cooperating and harnessing the hundreds of **media outlets of our affiliates**, use the various social media platforms and tools, and establishing itself as a reliable **source of information and opinion of mainstream media**. We will target the wrongful actions of the top players of the industries under the innovative “**Spotlight Project**" to pressure them into responsible business conduct. All these shall be elaborated in the new communication and campaigning **policy and strategy document**.

From 2018 to 2021, our lobbying and advocacy work at national and international arenas as well as our institutional engagements in multilateral processes to put workers’ rights as a central factor of policies and programmes, the BWI influencing strategic action will be termed **ADVANCE!**

In sum, under the slogan of **“fighting back with innovative unionism”** the BWI strategic actions shall be adjusted as follows:

The 3 Strategic Actions, as the compass of our movement, shall be infused in the various contexts - what BWI calls as the **Arenas of Trade Unionism** - where unions organise, negotiate, campaign, mobilise, and exert influence for change.
V. Arenas of Trade Unionism

The arenas are depicted as circular as they interact and affect each other. It is not a linear hierarchy but an overlapping dynamic sphere of engagements, rules and power relations requiring specific organisational forms, methods and measures.

1. Workplace

This is the basic unit of engagement for the trade unions. This can be a work site, a cement plant, a pre-fabrication area, a plywood factory, a sawmill, a forest cutting area, or a dam site, among others.

At this level, the direct employer as well as the main employers (depending on the chain of employment system) are the workers’ counterpart. Employment relations is primarily established here and labour controls and conditions are defined either unilaterally, if there are no unions, or bilaterally, if workers are organised and recognised. Workers deal directly with the employer and ideally uses collective bargaining to share decision making on terms and conditions of employment.

As noted, workplaces have now become a convergence of various employment systems thus union organising and negotiating must be cognizant of this reality. New ways to reach to all types of workers should be utilised and new approaches of representation must a used.

The primordial union work of organising-recruitment and collective bargaining happens at this arena. As the base of the workers’ movement, this is where members are firstly integrated in the union life. Unions locals or structures at workplaces are the cornerstones of the national and global unions. The key actor here is the BWI Affiliate who undertakes the organising together with their corresponding units like the organising department, the geographical branch, or the sectoral responsible.
2. Industry

This is the second arena where trade union actions happen. Workers have interest to influence industrial policies so that employment, economic policies and potentials are decided or formulated with consideration their agenda and proposals. In many industrial relations systems, collective agreements are signed at this area therefore broadening the coverage of joint regulations of working conditions.

Aside from collective bargaining, social dialogue, lobbying, advocacy, cooperation and partnership and policy inputs through own research and investigations shall be employed.

At this level, employer’ associations and trade groups as well as government bodies are our focus of engagement. The key player here is the BWI Affiliate functioning as National Union or Federation that represents the workers from the various locals and branches in the BWI industries. Union density and power is an important element for our work to succeed in this arena. Thus, trade union building is still a key action that can be facilitated by broad organising coverage, coordination, and even mergers.

3. Society

Workers, as members of a society and communities, have stake in politics as labour laws, institutions of industrial relations, social policies and enforcement of labour standards, recognition of rights, economic programs, administration of social protection institutions are decided upon by the State and its instrumentalities.

The democratic and social values of the trade union movement must be pursued within the realm of politics at it affects the working and living conditions of its members and the broader working class. BWI has categorised trade unions as “schools for democracy” thus it takes a very crucial social role in creating democratic and equitable societies.

At this level, workers shall engage the State and its instrumentalities. Government-initiated tripartite bodies, consultative councils, labour justice institutions, social protection agencies, labour administration and inspection agencies, economic development and industrial policy ministries all form part of their societal counterpart.

Negotiations, lobbying, advocacy and other forms of interest representation are the key actions for BWI unions to undertake. Labour clauses are crucial concern here as its formulation and application covers an extensive area of the building industry.

The union actor in this arena is still the BWI Affiliate (National Union or Federation) and in cooperation with national trade unions or national confederations. In some setting, BWI affiliates form a council or platform to collectively undertake lobbying and advocacy and even negotiations.

4. Region

The globalisation phenomenon has increased international cooperation and underscored the value of shared economic, political and even social interests. Labour markets concerns is central to regional and even sub-regional economic formations/blocs and trade agreements. Labour standard setting and policies making have occurred beyond borders of a country. Thus, workers must ensure that their interests and agendas are articulated and integrated in this system of decision-making.
At this level, workers engage regional blocs such as the European Union, ASEAN, SAARC, MERCOSUR, SADC, among others as well as trade blocs like NAFTA. Regional development banks like Asian Development Bank (ADB), European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), African Development Bank (AfDB), the new institutions such as the New Development Bank (NDB) and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), among others are also crucial target of engagement as they define (or default) on social and labour protection in their projects, loans, or grants. Labour clauses are central agenda as they are providing protection to workers and giving equal rights.

This arena of trade union work means BWI affiliates have to face supra-national and inter-governmental bodies. Lobbying and institutionalised engagements through social-political dialogue constitutes the course of union action at this arena.

BWI regional structures take a lead role in the engagement here and there shall be substantive support from the both the global and regional secretariat in terms of research, policy formulations, and lobbying. Alliance with other global unions and civil society groups is also needed in creating a strong front to influence the international institutions.

5. Global

The global governance infrastructure is based on the need to create cooperation, coordination and partnerships for the community of nations as the challenges to peace, economic development, universal values of democracy and human rights as well as humanitarian support intensifies in this period of wars, protectionism, and decline of multilateralism. Labour concerns should be protected and pursued in this international arena as they impact on workers on the ground.

ILO as the main labour standard setting agency – specially as it is tripartite in nature – is becoming an intense court to reduce workers’ rights.

Additionally, multinational companies are global players that have massive impact on labour markets around the world. There is a need to push them to operate on responsible business conduct and stop their impunity of exploitation. Engaging these economic behemoths means we should have power and representativity in its value chain. This is one of the rationales why global unions exists.

At this level, trade unions engage UN agencies, global financial institutions, international groupings of employers, MNCs, certification systems, thematic processes on urbanisation, forestry, migration as well as global sports bodies.

There are diverse actions that should be undertaken. Lobbying, advocacy, exposé, annual meetings, partnerships, submission of policy recommendations through formal mechanisms, institutional membership or participation and even direct negotiations leading to agreements are the means to influence and participate in labour related decisions and programs in this global arena.

BWI as a global union representing hundreds of unions takes the lead role in this arena. It deals with ILO on sectoral matters, dialogue and lobby international-multilateral agencies and processes, signs IFAs, conclude MoUs like the ones with FIFA and Qatar, and even cooperate in training programmes with IFIs.
VI. BWI’s Convergence

This Strategic Plan identifies 7 BWI Convergence which will indicate the priorities and actions for the Congress Period of 2018 - 2021. As mentioned, these priorities are called “Convergence” to illustrate and emphasise that these areas of work are where our structures and organizations come together to act in concert - the meeting points of our respective union actions, that we are all into it, and that we are in shared movements towards common goals. In football, this synchronicity is called “tifo”. Using the 3 Strategic Actions of BWI as revised to conform with the tone of the Strategic Plan, each of the Convergence shall be framed with Build (Organising), Defend (Negotiate), and Advance (Influence).

As the Strategic Plan identifies the priorities or focus of work during the congress period, it is important to lay-out the Trade Union Constants – activities that are basic in any trade union work. It constitutes the activities that are integral to the 3 strategic actions of BWI and at the same time applicable to the 7 Convergence. They are the following:

**Build!**
- Organise unions and recruit members
- Continue pilot organising projects in BWI engine countries and sub-sectors
- Develop membership retention strategies with affiliates
- Organise company and trades-based networks
- Assist in strengthening legal and para-legal capacities of affiliates
- Use other tools to reinforce union organising like IFAs, child labour programme, social security provisions and welfare boards, and migrants advocacy
- Update studies on BWI industries and on focus groups like women and youth
- Create a knowledge base on the BWI industries and value chains
- Facilitate greater ownership and role of affiliates from MNC home country

**Defend!**
- Push employers into basic mechanism of binding agreements – either through collective agreements or other pathways that retain trade unions as the workers representative
- Conduct social audit and problem solving thru IFAs
- Scale up the use complaint mechanisms in ILO, OECD, and forest and other commodity-based certification systems
- Sustain social dialogue with counterparts in the industry and the governments as well as other stakeholders
- Continue to negotiate-lobby the global sports bodies on workers’ issues
- Deepen and institutionalise the significance and broaden the actions around major workers’ days like May Day, 8th of March and 28th of April

**Advance!**
- Build cases and pressure through investigations and exposé
- Conduct rights-based campaigns and representation work
- Intensify urgent actions on trade union rights violations through public pressure and representation
- Formulate reform agenda and build alliances for labour law reforms
- Advocate for strict enforcement of labour clauses at all levels
- Lobby and advocate for labour standards and workers’ rights before Governmental, Inter-Governmental and International Bodies including on Trade Blocs and Agreements
- Use new and creative campaign actions at national and international levels
1. Rights for All

BWI will work on the broad area of human and workers’ rights. This is a multi-dimensional challenge that affects the individual worker, the collective expression which is the trade union, and the social fabric as abuse and exploitation continues in the world of work. The full exercise of trade union rights guarantee workers' decent working conditions and provide better life for their families. It creates a fair society and at the same time reinforces the power of trade unions to represent their members and the rest of the working class. For BWI, rights can only be guaranteed by a strong, self-reliant, independent, and truly representative trade union movement nationally and internationally.

- Institutionalise the BWI Organising Academy at global and regional levels
- Create mechanisms for integration of migrant workers/posted workers in union life
- Develop a BWI Migrants Rights Index (“ExploitNation”) and database for migrant members
- Work on other strategic organising targets by opening new organising and networking initiatives in new sectors and sub-sectors including the public sector as well as towards self-employed, mobile and geographically consolidated workers
- Promote sectoral bargaining to broaden joint regulation of working conditions
- Create workers defence networks to protect migrant workers from abuse, exploitation and social dumping
- Sign 4 memorandum of understanding (MoUs) between unions from countries of origins and destination
- Mobilise BWI members for a global campaign on living wage and wage theft
- Pressure governments to sign fair wages and decent working conditions in their migrant labour agreements with countries of destination
- Campaign for right to social protection and pension for workers in BWI industries
- Push for general liability of main contractors and reduction of layers of sub-contracting
- Safeguard rights of workforce trapped in precarious employment and lobby for child labour eradication

2. Safe Work

BWI industries are on the top of the “dangerous, deadly and difficult” list. From checking equipment to advocating policies, BWI and its members will take a central role in ensuring that workplaces do not kill, injure or make workers sick. With millions of fatalities every year, we cannot overemphasise the centrality of OHS in trade union work. From building houses to stadiums and from cutting trees to assembling a chair, accidents and injuries can happen. But they are avoidable and BWI sees this as part of the system and culture change that it will continue to pursue in the next 4 years.

- Develop a BWI labour inspection system and standards
- Launch BWI’s OHS 2.0 and organise a global network of labour inspectors
- Ensure creation of health and safety committees in workplaces
- Train more OHS advocates and technicians at union level through a systematic and efficient programme
Negotiate strong **health and safety provisions** in any form of agreements with employers

Sign **protocols and cooperation agreements** on OHS

**Defend!**

Push for improved **international health and safety standards** specially in dam construction

Create a “**Building Collapse Watch**” to track accidents and pressure governments for enforcement of labour standards

Campaign for **25 kilograms limit** for cement bags

Sustain the campaign to **ban asbestos**

Lead in creating a **global labour inspection mechanism** for large projects and mega-sporting events

**Advance!**

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### 3. Youth in Unions

The **successor generation** must start with union participation and even partake in leadership. Leadership **training and providing structures** for their participation in union life will lay the foundation for the future of the movement. Unionism is an inter-generational struggle that should integrate new constituencies and at the same time fight for secured retirement of workers.

- Formalise a **global BWI structure** for young workers
- Institutionalise a BWI **youth leadership formation** program
- Build **successor generation database** to facilitate union career paths
- Mobilise the youth for **campaign and communications** networking
- Operationalise **youth structures** at global and regional level

**Build!**

- Negotiate **job security** for new members of the workforce
- Ensure **equal rights and benefits** for young workers

**Defend!**

- Push for **youth employment policies** and programmes
- Promote **vocational training** programmes

**Advance!**
4. Gender Equality

Gender equality is a BWI goal but it will be anchored on the concept of justice in the realm of work and societies. Non-discriminatory policies and practices including access of women to jobs in BWI industries shall be pursued. Integration of women into trade union structures, creating organisational policies and agendas that cater to gender fairness, and promotion of their employment in BWI industries shall be operationalised.

- Institutionalise women leadership formation programmes
- Conduct gender sensitivity training for leaders and negotiators
- Promote affirmative actions in union leadership and structures
- Undertake gender audit in BWI structures and affiliates
- Build women leadership database to facilitate union career planning
- Negotiate for equal pay for work of equal value and similar work
- Push for non-discriminatory practices and provisions to stop all forms of gender-based violence at work
- Promote women participation in bargaining panels or committees
- Advocate for increase parental leaves
- Espouse reproductive health concerns and other issues related to women’s hygiene and facilities for women
- Spread and popularise best practices of the affiliates on women and gender issues
- Intensify the campaign on “Valuing Women’s Work”
- Launch a global “Stop Macho Culture” campaign
- Initiate “Women in Trades” campaign to forward new opportunities and highlight women skills

5. Sustainable Industries

Sustainable industries are anchored on decent and secure jobs. BWI shall engage the social partners to make sure that the race to the bottom will not be the norm in the various sectors of BWI. Labour standards are not obstacles to economic undertaking and failure to practice corporate responsibility can inflict reputational harm and even legal consequences. BWI shall strongly engage international standard setting bodies and mechanisms while at the same time push capital – specially the top players of the industries – to conduct themselves in a socially responsible and sustainable.

- Build BWI membership in green economy specially in renewable energy industries
- Develop BWI industrial policy competence in the headquarters and in the regions
- Form alliances with civil society groups and other stakeholders to campaign for responsible construction and sustainable forest management at national and international level
- Negotiate the compliance in forest certification systems of core labour standards in the chain of custody and controlled wood
- Protect workers, their unions and uphold labour standards in privatization processes
- Strengthen tripartite engagements on the future of work
6. Fair Games

BWI Sports Campaign is created an innovative union frame of action. This will continue as the gains of the past years have created more institutional possibilities of negotiations. But this will be pursued based on the basic work of union organising, engaging host countries and global sports bodies, as well as professionalising a labour inspection system for sports facilities and related infrastructures.

- Organising-recruitment at mega-sporting events workplaces
- Place sports campaign information in affiliates’ media outlets
- Use various social media platforms for awareness, opinion-building and mobilisation

- Push for collective agreements at sports-related worksites
- Apply international framework agreements in sports-related projects
- Sign agreements for and conduct thorough labour inspections
- Occupy spaces (like advisory boards and oversight bodies) that could institutionalise our negotiations and lobbying

- Integrate forest certification in the sports campaigns
- Pressure and engage the corporate sponsors of mega-sporting events to push for workers’ rights
- Advocate for due diligence as a central act in selection of hosts and venues
- Use BWI Migrants Rights Index to keep pressure on global sports bodies
- Participate in multi-stakeholder platforms, alliances and mechanisms around the responsibilities of sports bodies
7. Organised Value Chains

The impact of multinational companies in the global labour market is enormous. Some big and mobile players in our industries have signed IFAs with BWI. But corporate behaviours of these MNCs in other countries are deplorable. Supply-value chain organising and stronger coordination shall be undertaken for greater pressure.

- Workplace **organising-recruitment** in MNC chain of operations with additional focus on non-European companies
- Organise **6 new company networks**
- Coordinate 6 national and international **MNC-focused organising projects**
- Form **alliances** with other global unions in multi-sectoral value chains
- Negotiate **6 new IFAs** and strengthen IFA reference groups
- Hold to account **global and national managements** for anti-union actions and labour rights violations
- Launch **corporate campaigns** to target anti-union companies
- Intensify **“Stop Exploitation for Development”** campaign decent work in public infrastructure projects
- Advance and institutionalise social dialogue with **Chinese MNCs**
- Promote IFAs as **stronger instrument** of labour standards and social responsibility
- Pressure MNCs through stakeholder **workers’ capital** such as pension funds
- Support the **adoption of a UN Treaty** for Transnational Corporations and Human Rights